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## THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE.

Leaning over the parapet at Cannes, looking at the French fleet of men-of-war, some even at that moment leaving for Crete, and catching a glimpse of a great English ironclad bound in the same direction, I fell to musing on this strange development of the eternal European question.

Generous minds have been astonished and irritated in America as well as in Europe by the attitude of their governments toward Crete!

You may turn the matter as you like, this charming (?) harmony of the Powers protects the oppressor at the expense of the oppressed.

The motives for which Europe fought at Navarino needed no explanation! Does any one *dare* say why the Greek fleet before Canea was fired on last year?

The generous minds are right! It would be impossible to acknowledge the real reason of this wonderful harmony in Europe. It cannot be avowed; at least by the diplomats. To an observer it is the most significant event since 1871!

De Beust said at that time: "There is no more Europe!" He was wrong. One "Europe" was ending, but another was born.

For reasons of its own the new Europe wished that France should not seek revenge after 1871. Not only the Cabinets of Europe, but the people were against it; as to-day there is a universal wish that England should remain mistress of Egypt, and also perfect unanimity in protecting the death agony of the Turks from the reclamations of those they oppress. And in this way can be observed on grave questions an *European spirit* each year more marked in its manifestations.

This spirit is not noble, neither is it generous. It inclines to servility before the strong, in spite of solemn oaths, to the crushing of the humble. It is a low spirit, but it exists!

Is this not an historical phenomenon without precedent? If you could take the votes of Europe on the Cretan question, Europe would vote with an enormous majority to crush the Greeks!

The minority in their favor is largely composed of students, artists and thinkers—that is to say, people who have little money. *For the cord that binds the European majority together is of gold*—a cord both very strong and very flexible, which easily crosses frontiers and binds an Englishman, a German, and a Frenchman to the same purpose at the same moment,—when each looks into his morning paper to see what the Turkish debt is selling at!

The political prophets of fifty years ago did not foresee this. They turned over and over the problem of nationalities, trying to group and regroup the nations of the old world. They counted on free education, the emancipation of thought, to form a possible accord among these diverse peoples. They whispered to each other, "The United States of Europe," and smiled at their Utopia.

They were not so far from that "United Europe" as they imagined—only it was from causes absolutely opposed to their ideas that this union has been accomplished.

Europe perceives that she has certain general money interests, identical all over the continent, in spite of the differences of language and *régime*, while on matters of local or less general interest Europe is divided against herself.

An English statesman recently affirmed that the majority of the French

wished the English occupation of Egypt maintained ! That is false, as to absolute majority, but it is true as regards the majority *with incomes*—and they alone exert influence (under normal conditions) on the destinies of a country. So the English statesman is on the whole right ! For the French are against the Greeks, who have shown themselves bad payers of coupons, and in favor of the Turks, in whose financial regeneration they are deeply interested. The same is true of an Englishman, a Russian, or German, and thus is constituted a sort of international alliance, or rather a new nationality, the nationality of *bond holders*.

The bond holders do not yet raise their flag very proudly. They affect to talk of the "Peace of Europe," "International Rights," and a number of other things that really they care little for, but courage will come when they realize that they are a majority. And they are ! The number of people with incomes, and for that reason interested in international matters, is growing every day. Social evolution will not help matters. On the contrary it will quicken the development of the phenomenon, for beneath every Anarchist cry is the money question.

It is useless to say that trade rivalries will exasperate international feeling. The trades will come to some understanding where their money interests are the same.

For example, ask a French seaport to refuse from patriotism to allow a German transatlantic line to take their city as a landing place !

More and more each day financial questions become the same from country to country. When you double the communications between any two points it is (economically) as if you had halved the distance between them. Thus, little by little, the capitals of Europe are drawing nearer each other, the provinces approaching the centers and forming a commercial whole in proportion as their financial exchanges increase.

The "Zollverein" preceded the political union of Germany. As soon as it can be proved that the nations of the world are making among themselves a ruinous financial war, as soon as the taxpayers are weary of paying "bounties" to local industries, you may be sure that the financiers will step forward and arrange among themselves an international understanding. The money centres once working in union, the governments will follow, then the people.

Was it not the "capitalists" of our country that instigated the insurrection in Cuba ?

We will see a United States of Europe, united by finance, and many political questions which to-day appear without possible solution (because we insist on arguing on abstract ideas—patriotism, republicanism, "jingoism") will be straightened out by financial necessities, as surely as the mountain snow melted by the sun runs by nature's laws in the streams and rivers to the sea.

This new "union of states" will have all the attributes of our own. Where there is an even greater mixing of peoples, Asia and Europe having each contributed its contingent, they will develop the same financial ferocity and their politics will be a politics of money. Battles will be fought out at the Stock Exchange.

When Cleveland's warlike message made American securities drop on the London markets, how we became suddenly pacific as by enchantment !

The social formula of the future will be bitter protection of money interests and local patriotism replaced by a ferocious individualism.

In this vast "market," what is to become of the artists, the thinkers, those who live by "dreaming," to whom money has no intrinsic value, holding no relation to their work or their fame. The time will be hard for them !

A few enlightened and rich patricians do more for the arts than a universal democracy of people in comfortable circumstances. For with us, in spite of great sums spent with avidity for works of art and a sincere desire to cultivate ourselves on artistic matters, we have remained strangely sterile in art.

The reason is simple enough. In a civilization where everything comes from money and reaches out toward money the most fortunately endowed minds are distorted. The eternally heard "How much is that man worth?" tends to make the artist value himself only by the price his works sell for.

Art banished from the great financial centres will take refuge with some small people protected by their isolation from the great world.

Dreams, all this ? Look ! The first act of this united Europe was to turn its cannon against a nation culpable of heroism and misery ! Against the birthplace of art !

ELIOT GREGORY.